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Portobello's New Marine Gardens: Critical [Communitarian] Method in The Systematised Affective Turn

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Abstract

The concern of this paper is to reflect on the relations and tensions between contemporary social practices and abstract art practices. The key concern is the relation (or the “rapport,” Simondon, in Combes, 2013, p.xiv) between autonomous and collective creative production. I write this paper from the particular vantage point of professional architect and urban designer (and academic). Architects and urban designers are directly implicated in systems of governance. The varied relations that architects and urban designers have between the public, professional codes and the systems of governance prescribe certain methodological frameworks. However, such limitations also create vantage points from which to perceive specific questions of theoretical import and responsive methodological opportunities. This paper presents two Urban Design projects, one progressing from the other, each for *Portobello's New Marine Gardens*. They have both called upon various types of artistry as means to navigate the difficult terrain that circumscribes and defines the limits of various disciplines that share social and abstract relations with space, place and community.

Rather than follow the tendency found in a move towards the social that avoids artistry and abstraction, this paper and the two projects it conveys engage directly with the complexities of artistic representation as an important dynamic in developing community values. These socially situated projects operated as an exchange between art, music, architecture, urban design, landscape design and economics. They attempted to bridge between social dynamics, systems of governance and the abstractions of creativity. The point of showing something of the methodology of these projects is not so much to illustrate a successful arrangement between artist and systems of governance, but more to highlight a range of difficulties presented by the systems apparently put in place to work on behalf of the public that confront an artist trying to operate to critical communitarian impetus. For this paper, the two projects act as both foreground and background to a critical account of a recent shift in art practice and “governmentality” towards “affectivity”.

KEYWORDS: social and abstract art practices; art; architecture; urban design; space, place and community; affectivity; the affective turn; governmentality; criticality; communitarian method; methodology; representation; Marx; economics; autonomy; idiolectic; autological; sociolectic; heterological; political philosophy.

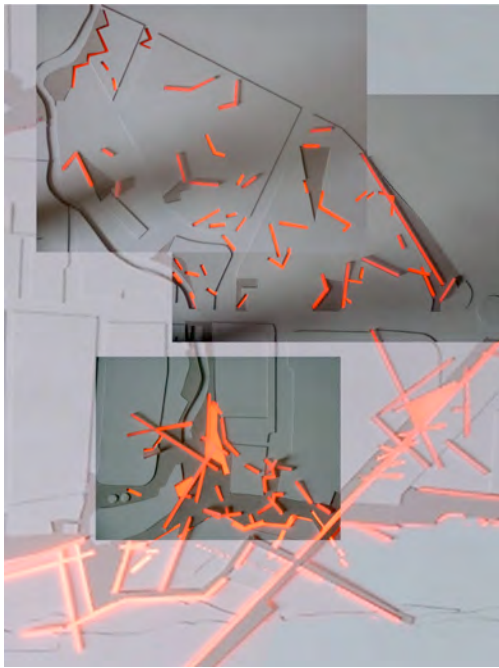


Figure 1: Project 1



Figure 2: Project 2

"The emergent school of "everyday" urbanism, while distinct from the grim generic of the neo-quants [the school of neo-quantification, an abstract version of functionalism that seeks to translate statistics directly to form] and crucial for empowering citizenship, nevertheless is too suspicious of formal experiment and overly sanguine about the dispensability of architecture as an artistic practice ... Urban design is a discipline...that must be the site of a merger between social, environmental, and formal practices. If we designers are to have relevance beyond that of stylists or critics, we must produce convincing forms — as many as possible — for this coming together. While many of the schools of this urban joinery might and should emerge, there is no way a satisfactory urbanism can be taught that slights any of these aspects. Let a thousand urbanisms bloom!"
(Sorkin, p.57)

Foreground/Background:

“Formal experimentation; a merger between social, environmental, and formal practices...”

I present here two projects. Each project looks innovatively and artistically into the Urban Design of Portobello, Edinburgh, Scotland. Project 1 considers the whole of Portobello (“Edinburgh’s Seaside”); it was produced by a pair of artists/architects/urban designers as one of five teams and projects looking into Scotland’s 6000 mile coast line, commissioned and curated by a government funded agency, Scotland’s Centre for Architecture, Design and The City. It was carried out between 2004 and 2005. Project 2 considers one part of the town, North West Portobello; it was produced by the same pair of artists/architects/urban designers in collaboration with an extended professional team and was commissioned by Edinburgh City Council with a view to the Masterplan becoming part of the North West Portobello Development Brief, and absorbed into the Local Plan (a legally binding governmental development directive). It was carried out between 2007 and 2008.

Project 1

Project 1 provided proposals for the development of Portobello as a landscape sensitive to its history under the themes of leisure and consumption. The project conceived of the town as a garden that brought together all the spaces between buildings as an extension of its seaside promenade. Although sponsored by a government agency, the project was free from specific legislative ties.

Project 1 Narrative:

We conceived of the city as a machine that attempts an efficiency of consumption - from the provision of means to what is actually necessary and consumed. Traditionally, the success of such provision then affords the instrumentation of leisure. This reciprocity between leisure and consumption has determined the relationships of Edinburgh to Portobello and Portobello Town to Portobello Promenade.

If on the morning of 6th November one were to have walked along Portobello beach (Table 2, Proj1, a, g, h) from Joppa Pans to beyond the bus depot on the site of the old Marine Gardens, as we did following the commission on November 5, washing up on the shore would have been flotillas of firework rods (Table 2, Proj1, l).

With Scotland's Parliament restored, Guy Fawkes' foiled bravado has renewed significance. However, this thought aside, the residue of Bonfire Night makes one wonder on the splendours of the night before and the specific effects carried by each found artefact. It must be that rocket rods are of proportionate length and width to the magnitude of effect. Fireworks have interesting names, for example, "Mixed Red and Blue Peony", "Blossoming Garden" (Table 2, Proj1, d), "Chrysanthemum Burst", "Jasmine Drops", "Flower Pot", "Surveyor", "Space Navigator" and "Twin Angles". Firework effects - the exploding images of flowers, their geometry, relative magnitudes and the illuminated skygardens they temporarily form - suggest landscapes that might be drawn, but perhaps only properly after some liaison between the pyrotechnician, the botanist, the astronomer, the sailor, the geographer and the architect (Table 2, Proj1, m).

If one was to think about how the firework illustrates the correspondence between consumption and leisure it can be seen as a case of indulgence in ephemera. As the firework makers seem to have recognised, the spending of fireworks is a pass-time akin to a stroll in the garden, partaking of effects that have no purpose other than to delight, marvelling in moments of wonderful effect, the wonderment of which is utterly dependent upon time passing (Table 2, Proj1, b). Project 1 considers images of Pyrotechnic Peonies replayed to their initial beholders by the Portobello tides (Table 2, Proj1, h-m). Obtaining hydrodynamic character as the consequence of their initial pyrotechnic magnitudes and ongoing entanglements, the firework rods shifting in the sand and surf perform their own water dance implying an astral-aquatic choreography of flowers and illuminations (Table 2, Proj1, j-m).

All of Portobello was proposed as the site of its lost Marine Gardens. The original Marine Gardens (Table 2, Proj1, f) were dug up during World War II because they were easily identified from the air and it was feared that they might become a navigating tool for the German Luftwaffe to direct their bombs onto the adjacent Portobello Power Station (which provided much of the power for Scotland's capital, Edinburgh, but also the heat for Portobello's renowned Modernist outdoor swimming pool which closed quickly after the power station ceased functioning in 1977). There seems to be a recurring history of these gardens being associated with conflagration, power and leisure, but also of the mapping of these relations between earth and sky. This architectural and urban design project enacted and inscribed an astral-aquatic choreography over the varied political, economic and

historical landscape of Portobello, involving varying cultural and economic topographies in the dance of flowers and illuminations (Table 2, Proj1g, n-p). It operated at super-structural and local scales. It formed proposals ranging in scale from new pier (Table 2, Proj1, o), winter garden and railway station to illuminated park bench (Table 2, Proj1, q) and hanging flower baskets. The proposals for the New Marine Gardens have appropriated the civic stature of firework skygardens and harnessed the power of ephemeral beauty to break the enforced instrumentality between leisure and consumption, that leisure may not simply be another form of material consumption, and that civic experience might also be a leisurely and delightful promenade.

Project 2

Project 2 provided proposals for a part of Portobello, specifically to give guidance to large- and local-scale developers already active in the site whilst giving voice to local communities and community action groups. It made proposals to develop many types and scales of public and private development, ranging between kindergarten, health centre, library, gallery and museum, sports pavilion, gardens, parks and up to one thousand varied types of dwelling. The major strategic shift in our role as designers that we negotiated with our clients, Edinburgh City Council, was from Masterplanners to producers of an Urban Design Framework. Rather than fixing all proposals to a master “vision,” the urban design framework proposed development sequences based on different economic and political scenarios. It accommodated issues of multiple land ownerships, varying economic scales and the need to effect legal and economic agreements between different scale stakeholders. It accounted for the sensibilities of Project 1, but developed different methodologies based on new and specific research and practices relevant to its communitarian aspirations but also critically engaged with the legislative dimension to the project. It proposed a range of projects with a collective wealth of over £200,000,000.

Project 2 Narrative:

The Urban Design Framework document contained many drawings, plans, tables, photographs and images from our own analyses and speculations (Table 2, P2, n-s), but its main purpose was to provide a detailed framework to guide and coordinate the development of North West Portobello over the next 15-20 years. The Urban Design Framework was designed to operate in two ways. First, it set out the general organization of circulation infrastructure and the articulation of private- and public-realm as a continuous garden-space.

The principle of continuous-space, the shared community space of public gardens (which would include hard and soft landscaping), was conceived as the matrix that binds together new housing, public buildings and private business uses. Second, the framework was conceived as a script, with clearly articulated Design Principles¹ and corresponding suggested Design Guidelines, that would stimulate and prompt further improvisations of at least a similar depth of local understanding and investigation for any spatial practitioners that might subsequently be employed within, and perhaps without, the Framework area (be they, for example, politicians, architects, urban designers, landscape architects or artists). We hoped to establish criteria of aspiration and a shared language for thinking and communicating about the area, whilst making clear recommendations for the extent and quality of public buildings, public realm and architecture. The document was a means for holding different stakeholder values as researched and developed in the history, place and space of specific communities. The particular history that generated most of the artwork of Project 2 gathered around the quirk of specific site geology (Table 2, Proj2, c-k): the clay pits were the reason for Portobello's 19th century industrial and community expansion, manufacturing the distinctive "Portobello brick", glass, lead, paper and pottery.

The Urban Design framework required a certain amount of infrastructural prescription. However, structuring the framework allowed for degrees of development flexibility: in terms of plot areas and number, use-mix and in the architectural and spatial language. The Framework allowed for various phases of development that could progress and adapt to reflect perceptual and socio-economic changes in the local area and in how the local meets and works with the broader contexts of town, city and state. As a document held in the offices of a government agency, it was to act on behalf of the local community whilst giving guidance to private stakeholders. The document provided something of a language for all stakeholders to share, whilst encouraging the development of further diversity in architectural and community language.

The Theoretical Context

The two projects and methodologies I outline here provide examples of an exchange between the theoretical and physical contexts of architecture, urban design, landscape design and art practices. Michael Sorkin suggests that urban design is in a parlous state. Although it

¹ Garden Edges; Promenade; Town Gateway; Building Stratification; Urban Grain; Orientation; Continuous Garden Space; Relative Scale and Section; Ecology and Environment; Lighting; Public Realm; Public Buildings; Use Mix.

now has an abundance of analyses and intellectual riches to draw from, for example, “Camillo Sitte and Otto Wagner to Max Weber, the Chicago School, Ebenezer Howard, Patrick Geddes, Lewis Mumford, Jane Jacobs, Henri Lefebvre, Manuell Castells, Christine Boyer, Mike Davis, Peter Calthorpe, and Rem Koolhaas” (op. cit. p.55), the field that might hold it as a discipline is contested. The diverse practices that frequently come together in this field have not yet reconciled some fundamental divisions that bring contentiousness but also distinctiveness to their practices: between the technical and artistic (for example, those that split engineering and architecture and planning and architecture in the 19th century, and those that are also commonly wedged between product-, ceramic-, fashion-, and textile-design and fine art); and between the empirical and creative (that frequently set up reciprocal antipathy between disciplines that develop practices of economic analyses, social science and social work, on one hand, and those that speculate into formal arrangements and physical disposition of socii, on the other).

Such divisions are not easily reconciled. My own position, like Sorkin’s, recommends progressing architecture and urban design as an artistic practice. However, such an artistic practice requires developing means for negotiating the diverse views that shape artistic, technical, empirical and creative practices. Furthermore, for my practice and the theorisation of my practice, it also requires the development of means for how the socii might participate in such negotiations. My research into the operations of community has come to a position that suggests if we are to maintain a communitarian exigency it is necessary to confront the apparently contradictory understanding that community is an unachievable end. Community is means not end. This position is informed by various writings, for example, of Jurgen Habermas (intersubjectivity), Émmanuel Lévinas (alterity), Maurice Blanchot (the unavowable), Giorgio Agamben (the Open and Means Without End), Gregory Bateson (pattern language); and Felix Guattari (ecosophy and trans-subjectivity).

In short, what I mean is that community, as a group of socii with common territorial interests, is not an idea, but a working practice. As a working practice it is always working on its own formation. This formation is in constant development over time, sometimes with imperceptible incremental changes, at times with seismic shifts. To suggest community is in place is to suggest a working arrangement of co-operating socii. However, it is clear that community co-operation does not necessarily mean working towards one shared goal; it can also mean a working together to achieve and maintain different ambitions. Furthermore, it seems important to understand that community is not a hermetic formation. It is influenced

and formed as much from outside as inside forces. For my practices, community is understood to be heterological rather than homological, and it works in a heterogeneous world. I have therefore been developing practices, which include the processes of Projects 1 and 2, for coming to terms with the affirmation of community, architecture and urban design as partial, insufficient and indefinite.

The Affective Turn

Currently affecting the operations of community in the UK is a rise in local and state government sponsoring and funding mechanisms of public art reverberating to the clamour of the “affective turn” (Halley and Ticineto Clough, 2007). Government agencies are going along with the impetus directed by disciplines within the humanities and social sciences that suggest the value of artistic processes should be based on how the reconciliation between “mind and body, action and passions” (Hardt, op.cit. p.xi)² affects society and, in turn, the apparatuses of society. Arguably, it stems from an earlier, more radical, phase of cultural production that proposes art as “one of the products of collective labour.” (Negri, 2011, pp.33-43).³ The attractiveness of the affective turn to government is that it provides the promise of measurable outcomes. Therefore, government agencies hope that art projects can then operate, and be proven to operate, against the claims of elitism, uneven distribution and outmoded values of the now historical institutions (for example, in the UK The Arts Council of Great Britain, initially set up to promote the art and culture of Great Britain after the devastation World War 2, has been devolved into the Arts Council England, Arts Council Wales, Arts Council Northern Ireland and The Scottish Arts Council).

However, despite good intent, I suggest the new replacement institutions and methods can potentially exacerbate tensions in the relations between society, economy and governance. Furthermore, there is also a danger that government agency ferments further dissent between disciplines. Without any over-arching consensus between disciplines to guide government, there grows within it an age-old suspicion cast upon artistic practice by bureaucratic and political practices for which autonomous art provides no clear illumination. Such misunderstanding of the potential of artistic practice distorts the field in which it operates. This not only distorts the processes of art production, but it has consequences for

² Michael Hardt, co-author with Antonio Negri of *Empire*, invokes this pair of Spinozian dialectics as the basic tensions the Affective Turn seeks to mediate.

³ Antonio Negri speaks of the continued importance of collective work to himself as one of the Italian “young Hegelians” of the 1950s, 60s and 70s in an epistle to Manfredo Massironi.

the processes of community formation. There are at least three accumulative negative consequences to the distortions of a “governmental” appeal to affectivity.

First, affectivity operates as an extension of “governmentality” (Foucault, 1972). That is, what is affective is determined, and more often than not pre-determined as effective, by the hegemonic, bureaucratic, managerial and administrative evaluations of what is deemed to be good for society and what kind of society is good.

Second, government frequently operates as an instrument of commerce. Commercial pressures can easily compromise any claim by government (or art practice) that the affective turn operates to the development of authentic social interests; it can only be possible if there is a precise alignment between society, government and commerce. In such a condition, by implication, the “autonomy” of art is renounced. I ask, is this either possible or even desirable (Negri, 2011)?

Third, the relations between institutions, commerce and government are entangled. As much as there are divisions in the world of politics, there are divisions in the worlds of art and the social sciences. This series of heterodoxies not only compete in the worlds of their own disciplines, they also compete for their share of the common world of political and economic governance. To compensate for such complexity, there is a tendency and economic pressure within large organisations to corporatize. Corporatization follows the project of clear alignment rather than complex entanglement. Irregularities are resisted and ironed-out. Therefore, the forces within institutions that most readily represent commerce and government (in easily packaged and consumable means) tend to become dominant. The project of alignment develops a direct relation between art practice and art institution. In other words, when specific formulations of art practice become dominant or are given dominance, they tailor artistic affectivity into specific artistic effects. This characterises art institutions by also determining how practices of art, society and science are instituted. In short, rather than allowing affectivity to be the infinite capacity of the immeasurable qualities of artistic practice to enrich the world, affectivity is frequently reduced to what can be readily measured in advance and represented again afterwards to secure status and the corporate image.

The fundamental divisions outlined above between artistic and technical practices, coupled with an oppositional propensity towards either the empirical or creative, are not only the basis of antipathies between disciplines, or even in communities themselves, they are the divisions that are also responsible for a reductionism in managerial and bureaucratic processes of governance that impinge on how communities form themselves and how communities see themselves in relation to art production. The driving question for this paper and for Projects 1 and 2 is not only whether or not communities and disciplines can develop sophisticated means for coming to terms with their differences, it is also how we might create and enrich the opportunities to do so.

The Impetus of Theorisation in Projects 1 and 2

In other words, my overriding question asks whether it is possible for art/architectural/urban design practice to inform “governmentality” rather than uncritically accept the increased tendency for “governmentality” to direct disciplinary practices? This is what lies in my title. Through my projects for *Portobello’s New Marine Gardens*, I have speculated into the development of critical [communitarian] methods as compensatory means to the tendencies of governmentality that inevitably systematises the “Affective Turn” through the distortions of its drives for achieving political outcomes. However, I have also understood the question to be reciprocal. How do we develop an emancipatory politics of art practice in light of the bureaucratic impulse of government and the institutions that they command?

Project 1 certainly has an artistic impetus. Some have said it is poetic (Table 2, Proj1, u, v). Project 2 has a more bureaucratic and legislative context. We have attempted to flood the bureaucratic context with artistic and communitarian methodology. The processes of Projects 1 and 2 are summarised and presented here through two tables each with two columns. Project 1 is in the left column. Project 2 is in the right column. Tables 1 and 2 list sequences of processes presented chronologically top to bottom. Table 1 is textual and lists the approximate work sequence of both projects, indicating the shifts from internal to external processes, that is, shifts from exposure to judgements from within the artistic practice to judgements from outside (indicated by red dots) ranging between peer, community and governmental agencies. Table 2 is a sequence of images. It is a summary of some of the creative output and representational techniques that formed the basis of both projects. There is underscoring in the Project 2 column of Table 2 that corresponds with the same underscoring in the Project 2 column of Table 1. Reading between the tables, this

underscoring in the columns of Project 2 gives an indication of the chronological relationship between the sequences of internal processes to the sequences of external consultations.

These two projects have called upon the autonomy of art practice but as it has been brought into a collective social exchange. Project 1 was presented and opened to critical comment from fellow artists (Table 1, Proj1, 3). It was published in a book and was part of a travelling national exhibition with a special viewing to the local community (Table 1, Proj1, 5-8). Project 2 was developed through recurrent meetings with community groups and business stakeholders, specialist consultants and city officials (Table 1, Proj2, 3-15). Over 300 postcards, each with a list of comments and desires, were processed and eventually logged in an appendix to the Urban Design Framework document (Table 1, Proj1, 9). After each occasion of consultation new drawings were produced (Table 2, Proj2, a-m). The Urban Design Framework Document stands only as a contribution to the ongoing processes of artistic, community, architectural- and urban-formation (Table 2, Proj2, n-s).

To further elaborate the artistic practice of the two projects presented here, I would like to discuss an important theorisation by Antonio Negri that formulates an ethical premise between artists and communities. Negri suggests that art is a democratic mechanism: “it produces language, words, colours, sounds that cluster together into communities, into new communities” (Negri, quoted by Toscano, 2009, p.375). The two projects I briefly outline here pursue the production of architectural language: the processes of the various modes of production stimulated words, colours and sounds. The language we spoke and presented through our creative processes we found in existing communities. We recurrently presented this new language within community. It is a language developed in the history, place and space of specific communities. We listened and developed the language accordingly. By speaking the language of and within the community we simultaneously opened ourselves to community and community opened up to us. We hoped to make an abundance of shared sensuousness in what we proposed as collective works. The language developed as a “rapport” between artists, history, place, space and community (Combes, 2013, p.xiv). We hoped the new words, colours and sounds might cluster together into new community.

In a recent critical account of Antonio Negri’s appeal for the abundance (excess) of shared sensuousness in the collective work as the basis of community, Alberto Toscano, perhaps re-

framing Theodore Adorno's earlier doubt (Adorno, 1999, p.123),⁴ asks whether it is possible for art "as linguistic communication and cooperative creativity" to be like labour and be "granted an irrepressible political positivity" (Toscano, 2009, p.375). Toscano is critical of the representational dimension to Negri's project. Toscano reminds us of "the menace that collective agency will remain fettered to those forms of abstraction that capital subsumes" (Toscano, 2009, p.381). Toscano warns of the tendency for the institutional to dominate and questions whether an appeal to the abstract has the power to resist commodification either in the first instance of genesis or as subsequent basis of capital exchange and ultimate community benefit? He doubts that a collectively shared sensuousness towards the abstract can act as an extension of artistic autonomy as Negri suggests. This doubt is understandable. Toscano is operating from an awareness of the ever-greater restrictive lens of the neo-liberal politic that inevitably limits the operations of the "affective turn." He is doubtful if even Negri's "young Hegelian" mindset can break free from this circumscription.

However, I suggest there is still an important lesson. Negri's position requires the granting of artistic autonomy in the first instance of artistic and social relations. Negri suggests that artistic impetus neither comes entirely from the institutions nor entirely from the perceived urgencies and imperatives of the collective. The artistic impetus comes from artists. However, Negri urges that artists operate by being in the midst of emerging communities; but he also urges a critical engagement with the institutions that have a controlling influence on art production. Negri supposes the basis of community to come from the openness towards artistic autonomy on one hand, by those that are not necessarily artistic, and by openness towards the project of art as a community operation on the other, by those that are artistic and expert in developing methodologies autonomous to the instrumentality of governance and capital.

Therefore, if we are to advance Negri's appeal to collective being, "a manifestation of an ontology of labour, or even of 'creativity' or 'life' *tout court*, which tends toward the indiscernibility between work, political work and the artwork" (Toscano, 2009, p.375), we cannot deny the place of either the artist or artistic representation in the complex relations between artists, institutions and communities. This requires openness to complex and difficult processes. Therefore, following Negri's urgency, we have to develop methodologies in order to reconcile two forces of opposing logicity: we cannot expect to produce

⁴ Adorno doubts whether an art project can be political. He doubts whether it is possible to avoid the snare of representation.

language, words, colours and sounds that cluster together into new communities by relying on either, first, the hermetic language of solipsistic conceit (the entirely rarefied internal practices of art distinct from any social, working and shared dimensions) or, second, the recurrent reverberation of mechanical, technical, colourless and hollow econo-governmental rhetoric (the entirely general and normalised systemic operations of bureaucratic legislative limitation).⁵

Negri suggests we cannot rely on either the old languages of art, the old languages of community or the old language of politics. The purpose of the avant-garde, be it the avant-garde of art, community or politics, is continuously to refresh language. Language has to be developed, this is not easy, between many, and this also is not easy. In the projects I present here, I hope partially to illustrate an art/architecture/urban design practice that has gone some way to navigate the flows of idiolectic and sociolectic currents. The language we have developed has moved between the idiolectic and autological and the sociolectic and heterological. We hope the language has been developed whilst avoiding the fixations of dominant institutional and governmental systems that favour those modes and outputs of art practices that can be readily measured against prescribed outcomes and speak the safe, politically correct view. I can say that this was certainly not easy. However, we hope also that being in the midst of community has been crucial to the development of a new and productive language, not by pretending to belong to community but by working in the flow and formations of community.

Conclusion

As stated from the outset of this paper, the two projects are presented here not so much to illustrate or to suggest a successful arrangement between artist, community and systems of governance. They are shown more to highlight how the projects attempted to navigate a range of difficulties presented by the systems apparently put in place to work on behalf of the public. They evidence a series of processes that exercise an artistry, perhaps particular and limited by the methodological structures of governance that situates architecture, urban and landscape design within professional bodies, and in the instance of Project 2 within

⁵ Marx and Engels suggest that capitalism exaggerates the tendency for artistic practice to be understood as exclusive and only truly understood by the gifted: "The exclusive concentration of artistic talent in particular individuals, and its suppression in the broad mass which is bound up with this, is a consequence of division of labour." Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, 1970, p.109, as quoted by Negri, 2011, p.39.

urban planning specifically tied to the systems of state governance,⁶ but they are directed nonetheless from what I suggest is a critical communitarian impetus. Autonomous processes of specific artistic skill and knowledge were coupled with critical understanding of bureaucratic procedures. The autonomous processes were recurrently directed through community. The workings of community were theorised and practised as including all disciplines and all stakeholders. Whether or not the projects evidence successful shifts between the idiolectic and autological and the sociolectic and heterological to produce language, words, colours and sounds that cluster together into new communities remains open.

However, it can be reported that these critical communitarian methods, in both Projects 1 and 2, were already too radical for some. Ironically, these negativities, fears really about the artistic dimensions of the projects, tended to be felt by those charged with looking after community rather than those in the community. The division between the artistic and technical, which has a parallel in the division between the artistic and bureaucratic, is understandable. However, what would be of greater concern is if this negativity towards artistic practice is because the view of community comes entirely from within the bureaucratic and legislative “governmental” world rather from within the complex shifting view of the world of community.

⁶ In the UK, most professional architectural and landscape practices operate as private firms. However, most of those qualifying with an Urban Planning degree go directly into public service as an aspect of local authority and state government.

PROJECT 1, 2004-5

- "Pyrotechnic Peonies: Portobello's New Marine Gardens provides a totally innovative approach to design solutions by seeking contextual inspiration in forms other than the physical urban fabric of Portobello. As a planner – and neither an architect nor artist – I take a practical and pragmatic approach to design proposals, so this approach was somewhat daunting at first sight."*

If I walked around Portobello with the architects, we would agree on areas where change or improvement was required or desirable ... the test is whether the resultant ideas have any basis in reality and whether they can be translated into achievable designs fitting in with the more rigid practicalities of the planning system.

The ideas are innovative and inspiring – but are realistic and achievable.”
City Council, Strategic Development Team, 2005

"This project can be read at different levels, it is, or generates sufficiently beautiful images for it to be savoured as a piece of conceptual art, but its power lies in the transformation of the signs into translatable architectural interventions which are set in and compliment their mutual context."

PROJECT 2, 2007-8

- The Art of Research 2012 Helsinki

TABLE 2: Internal Processes Exposed to External Judgements

PROJECT 1, 2004-5



a



b

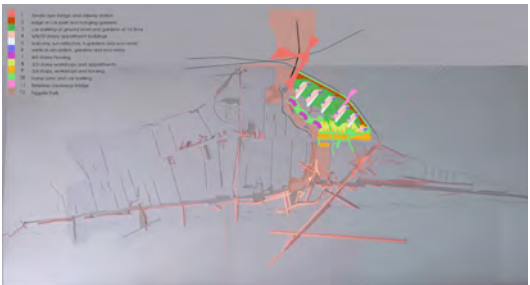


c



d

PROJECT 2, 2007-8



a



b



c



e



d



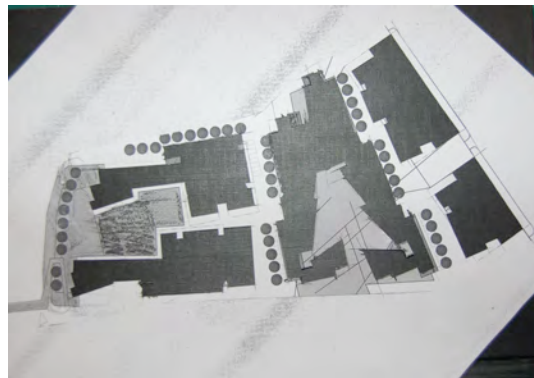
f



e



g



f



h



g



i



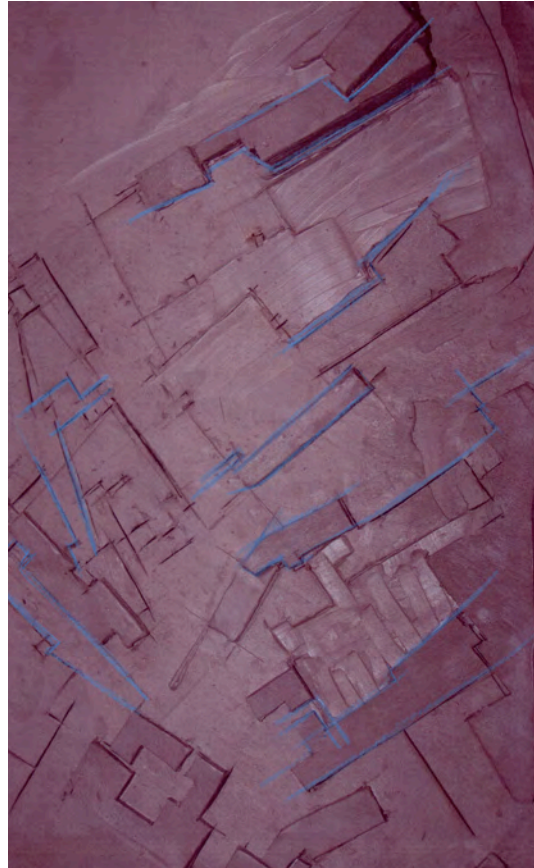
h



j



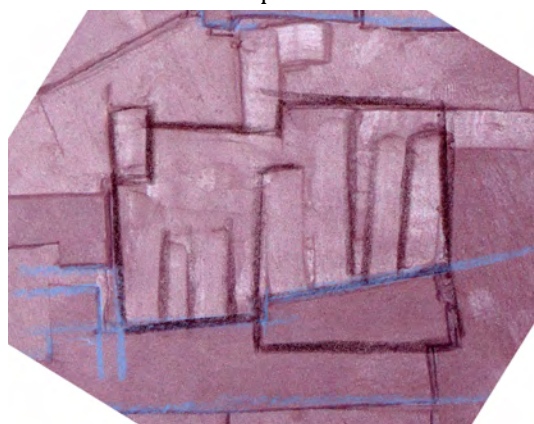
k



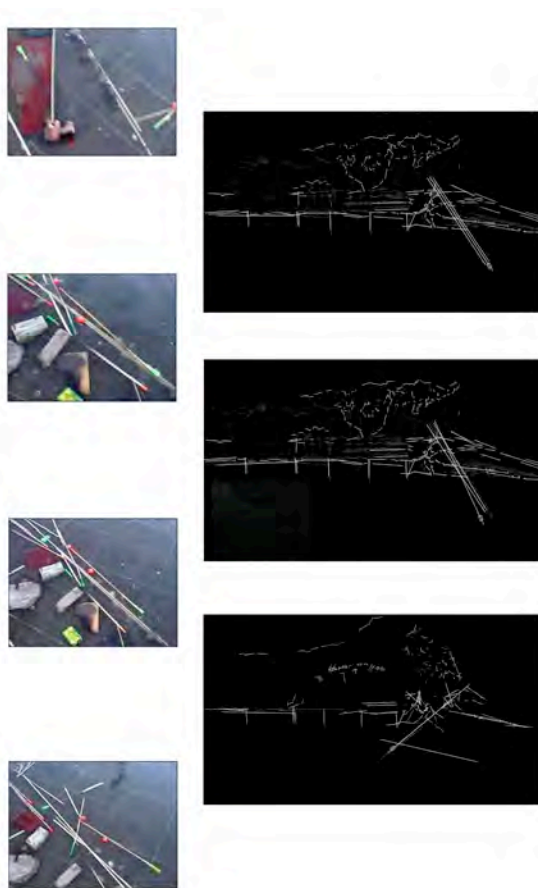
i



l



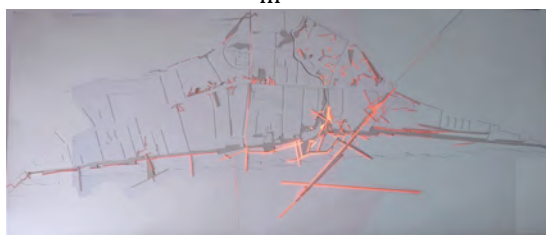
j



m



k



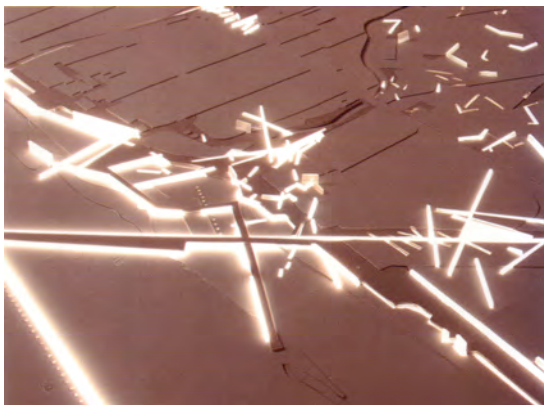
n



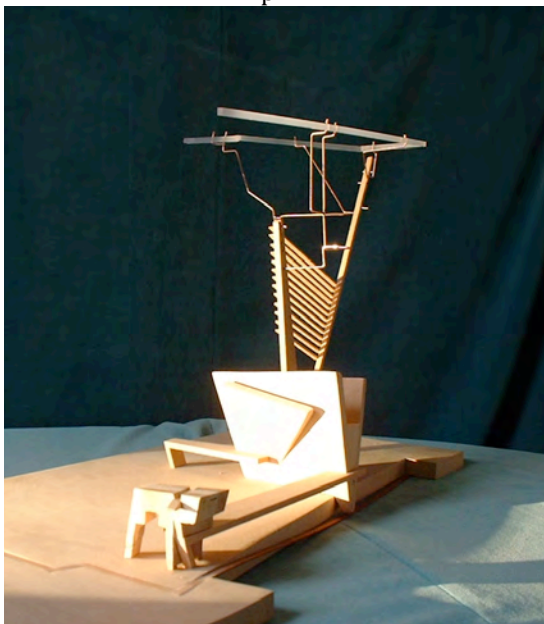
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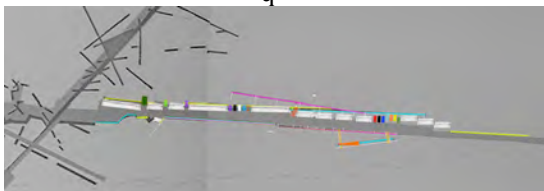
o



p



q



r



s



m

north west portobello

urban design framework



n

north west portobello

vision 1



David Patterson, Thomas H. Davenport

o

north west portobello

5



2. present plan: context and history
The history of north west Portobello is rich in historical detail. The plan that emerged from the plan of Portobello is a result of a long and complex process. The plan of Portobello is a result of a long and complex process. The plan of Portobello is a result of a long and complex process.



David Patterson, Thomas H. Davenport

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"Pyrotechnic Peonies: Portobello's New Marine Gardens provides a totally innovative approach to design solutions by seeking contextual inspiration in forms other than the physical urban fabric of Portobello. As a planner – and neither an architect nor artist – I take a practical and pragmatic approach to design proposals, so this approach was somewhat daunting at first sight. If I walked around Portobello with the architects, we would agree on areas where change or improvement was required or desirable ... the test is whether the resultant ideas have any basis in reality and whether they can be translated into achievable designs fitting in with the more rigid practicalities of the planning system. The ideas are innovative and inspiring – but are realistic and achievable."

City Council, Strategic Development Team, 2005



"This project can be read at different levels, it is, or generates sufficiently beautiful images for it to be savoured as a piece of conceptual art, but its power lies in the transformation of the signs into translatable architectural interventions which are set in and compliment their mutual context."

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